

**CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM REVIEW SHEET**

ITEM: Briefing on the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan Preferred Growth Scenario and Plan Framework

PLANNING COMMISSION DATE: February 22, 2011

SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend endorsement of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan Preferred Growth Scenario and Plan Framework.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

At their February 22, 2011 meeting the Planning Commission recommended endorsement with changes to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan Framework and forwarded the Preferred Growth Scenario to the Austin City Council.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS / BACKGROUND:

Beginning in late 2009, the process to gather public input to create a new comprehensive plan for Austin began with Community Forum Series (CFS) #1. Through this phase of the input process the community was asked about Austin's strengths, what needed to be improved, and what they would like to see for Austin by 2039. These meetings were complemented by meetings-in-a-box and an online and paper survey.

In May and June of 2010, CFS #2 asked the community to allocate where 750,000 new Austinites will live and where 300,000 new jobs will be located. Based on the public input from CFS #2, four possible scenarios were developed:

- Scenario A— this scenario widely distributed the jobs and population broadly throughout the study area.
- Scenario B—this scenario distributed most of the jobs and population in an eastern crescent arching from far northwestern Austin to the east and then to far southeastern Travis County at the intersection of IH 35 and SH 45.
- Scenario C—this scenario distributed the jobs and population in the central part of Austin and in a number of centers surrounding the core.
- Scenario D—this scenario distributed the jobs and population in a north-south linear fashion between Mopac on the west and US 183 and SH 130 to the east.

In addition, a trend scenario was developed to show where the additional population and jobs could be reasonably expected to locate if current policies and trends continue into the future. Each of these possible futures was matched with a transportation network that would be needed to serve the distribution of jobs and population.

In the fall of 2010, CFS #3 asked the community to review the four scenarios developed from public input as well as the trend scenario. To assist in comparing the different visions for Austin's future, a number of indicators were developed. Through a series of public meetings,

online surveys, and paper surveys that were distributed in the Austin American Statesman, the Austin Chronicle, Austin branch libraries, as well as at a number of other public events, the public was asked to comment on the five futures. Based on public input, Scenario D was preferred by almost 50% of the respondents followed by Scenario C which preferred by over 25% of the respondents. The other three scenarios split the remaining 25% of the respondent preferences.

Based on the survey responses, a Preferred Growth Scenario was developed which kept the north-south character of Scenario D and added some of the centers from Scenario C located along SH 130. In addition, announced and already approved projects were included in the preferred scenario. In very general terms, the draft Preferred Growth Scenario expresses the ideal direction for Austin's future physical development and preservation for the next 30 years in Austin and its ETJ.

The Preferred Growth Scenario was reviewed by the Comprehensive Plan Citizens Advisory Task Force (CPCATF) at two of their meetings and forwarded to the Planning Commission and City Council at their February 8, 2011 meeting.

The Plan Framework summarizes the wealth of public input gathered over the three CFS and is a set of "topical" building blocks (land use and transportation, housing and neighborhoods, economy, etc.) identifying strategic directions for action to achieve the Imagine Austin Vision. The Plan Framework organizes the ten charter-required elements and the four identified through the public input into seven building blocks:

- **Land Use and Transportation** (*includes Future Land Use, Urban Design, Traffic, and Mass Transit*)
- **Housing and Neighborhoods** (*includes Housing*)
- **Economy** (*includes Economic element*)
- **Conservation and Environmental Resources** (*includes Conservation and Environmental Resources*)
- **City Facilities and Services** (*includes Wastewater; Solid Waste, Drainage, Potable Water; Public Service and Facilities; Public Buildings and Facilities: Recreation and Open Space*)
- **Society** (*includes Health and Human Services; Children, Families, and Education*)
- **Culture** (*includes Arts, Culture, and Creativity; Historic and Cultural Preservation*)

It was prepared by WRT and City of Austin staff. The Plan Framework was reviewed by the CPCATF at three of their meetings and was forwarded to the Planning Commission and City Council at their February 8, 2011 meeting.

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